Abraham's Death.

THE

MANNER, TIME, and CONSEQUENT of it.

Opened and Applied

IN A

FUNERAL SERMON,

Preached upon the Death

Of the Reverend Mr. *THOMAS CASE*,
Minister of the Gospel.

June 14th, 1682.

With a Narrative of his LIFE and DEATH.

By *THOMAS JACOMB*, D. D.

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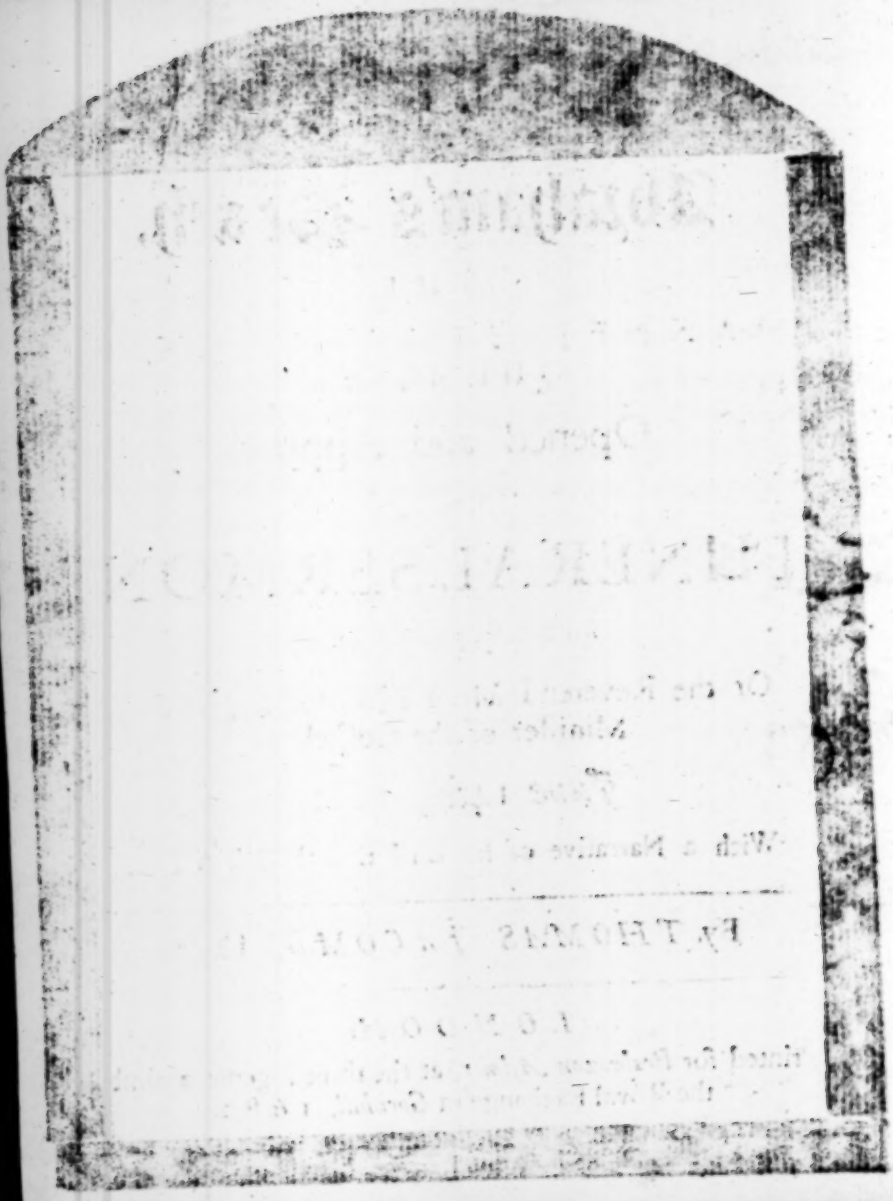

To Mrs. *Anne Case*, Wife to the Reverend Mr. *THOMAS CASE*, Minister of the Gospel, lately deceased.

Much Honoured Friend,

IT was the reiterated Request of your Dear Husband, (and my worthy Friend), that I would perform the last Office of Respect to him in the preaching of his Funeral Sermon, when-ever it should please God to take him hence. And this Request of him (whilst living), your self was pleased to back after his Death.

I have again and again publickly testified my Averseness from engaging in Services of this Nature; and (possibly) as to engaging in this, there were some special Reasons and Considerations to heighten my Averseness. Yet, considering how I was pressed to it, by the Desires both of the Dead and of the Living; I thought, I should be disingenuous and defective in the Obligations of Friendship, if I did not comply with them; which therefore accordingly I did.

Having discharg'd the Preaching Part, you further desired me to publish what I had preached. To gratify you in that, I was the more inclinable, because I had left things in the Sermon so imperfect and unfinish'd; (for I had not time to go through a considerable part of what I had to say, both upon the Text, and also upon the Occasion). The Truth is, while I grasp't at too much, I did nothing (to purpose); and therefore was willing to do what you desired, that I might have an Opportunity of filling up what then was wanting.

I am very sensible what a Captious and Litigious Age we live in, how Divisions and Animosities do abound amongst us, how hard a matter it is for One to commend One of his Party, (especially if he be of any considerable Eminency therein); but some or other of a differing Party will be finding fault, and picking out something to be the matter and ground of severe Censures. If this shall be my lot, I must submit;

but I have done whatever I could to prevent it; For I have so commended the Person discourſed of, as not in the leaſt to reflect upon any others of a different Perſuaſion. And as to the commending of him too, I have not done it raſhly or blindly, but all along, (to the beſt of my Knowledge) have kept within the ſtrict Bounds of Truth and Juſtice. Yea, to avoid Partiality *and* Flattery (*the too common Attendents of* Funeral Sermons), *I have*, (*with all due Modeſty*), *taken notice of his* Infirmities *as well as of his* Excellencies. *If all this will not ſtop me from Cenſures, I hope I ſhall bear them with Patience*, (*if not with Contempt*).

How many Funeral Sermons *did your dear Husband live to preach for others! here is now one preached for himſelf; and God knows how ſoon ſome may do that for me, which I have now done for him. We live in a fluid State, and have no Abiding here. No ſooner had I diſpatch'd what I had to do upon the Death of* this Friend, *but God threatens me with the Death of* Another; (*a moſt Eminent Perſon of* another Profeſſion): Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity!

The Lord bleſs you and yours; and grant you all to reap the Benefit of thoſe many, many fervent Prayers, which he (*who is gone*) *ſent up to the Throne of Grace daily for you. All that I ſhall further ſay is, but to aſſure you, that now you are deprived of the Prayers of the Dead; you ſhall ever have the hearty Prayers of him, who whilſt he lives, ſhall be ready upon all occaſions to ſhew himſelf,*

Your Servant and

July 21, 1682. Friend in Chriſt,

Tho. Jacomb.

Abra-

Abraham's Death.

GEN. 25. 8.

Then Abraham *gave up the Ghoſt, and died in a good old Age, an old Man, and full of Years, and was gathered to his People.*

THE Words, give us a brief Hiſtorical Account of the *Death* of the Patriarch *Abraham.* A large Deſcription we have, of his *Genealogy*, *Birth*, and *Life* (from the cloſe of the 11*th* Chapter to the beginning of this 25*th* Chapter): But as to his *Age*, *Death*, and *Burial*, the Hiſtory of them is contracted within the ſhort Bounds of *three* Verſes here; (the 7*th*, 8*th* and 9*th* Verſes.)

'Tis the *Death* only of *Abraham* that I ſhall diſcourſe of. Concerning which, here's as much ſaid in *a little* as could well be expected, or deſired, upon ſuch an Argument.

The Occaſion of our preſent aſſembling is, That we may pay our laſt Reſpects to the Reverend and Worthy Mr. *Thomas Caſe*, Miniſter of the Goſpel, (lately deceaſed) With whom the Text does ſo well ſuit, as that, *mutato Nomine*, we may read it thus; *Then* CASE

gave

gave up the Ghoſt, and died in a good old Age, an old Man, and full of Years, and was gathered to his People.

In the managing of the Work in hand, I will firſt ſpeak to the *Inſtance* here mentioned, and to the *Matter* aſſerted of him; and then bring that down to our *precious Friend*, (upon whoſe account we are come together this Day).

As to the firſt, obſerve;

1. The *Perſon ſpoken of*, [ABRAHAM.]
2. *What is ſpoken of him* here; [he *Died.*]
3. The *Amplifications* about his Death.

   1. *From the Manner of it*; [*He gave up the Ghoſt.*]
   2. *From the Time of it*; [*In a good old Age, an Old Man, and full of Years.*]
   3. *From the Conſequent of it*; [*And was gathered to his People.*]

'Tis the *Third Head* that I deſign to ſtay upon; the *Two Firſt* I'll put together, and briefly diſmiſs.

[Then ABRAHAM — Died.]

This *Abraham* was a *great Man*, a *great Saint*: who, in the whole Catalogue of Saints bears a greater Name than He? He was *a Prophet*, *Gen.* 20. 7. the *Friend of God*, Jam. 2. 23. *The Father of the Faithful*, Rom. 4. 16. One who was, and for ever will be, renown'd for thoſe two unparallell'd Acts of *Obedience and Love* to God; (his forſaking of his own Country, and his readineſs to offer up his dear and only Son.) Well! what became of this eminent Perſon? Surely, his extraordi-

traordinary Grace and Holineſs, that high Rank of Faith and Obedience wherein he ſtood, exempted him from that *Death* which we poor Striplings are expoſed unto! No, 'twas not ſo, he *Died*, went the way of *all Fleſh*, under-went the Stroke of Death juſt as we do.

Saints themſelves, the higheſt and choiceſt of them; the Servants of God, they who are moſt eminently uſeful and faithful; even They are ſubject to Dying as well as others. *Obſerv.*

'Twould be tedious, and unneceſſary (in ſo plain a Caſe) to heap up parallel Inſtances: That great Servant of God, *Moſes*, he *died*; that great Prophet *Samuel*, he *died*; all the *Prophets* of the Old Teſtament, all the *Apoſtles* of the New, all *died*; (as we have it in Scripture-Record). Deut. 34. 5. 1 Sam. 25. 1. Zech. 1. 5.

All the Exemption from Death that the *Beſt* can claim or hope for, is, to be exempted from *Eternal*, but not from *Natural Death*. Grace does free Believers from the *former*; (*Whoſoever liveth, and believeth in me, ſhall never die*; Joh. 11. 26. — *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, If a Man keep my Sayings, he ſhall never ſee Death.* Joh. 8. 51. — *Bleſſed and holy is he that hath part in the firſt Reſurrection; on ſuch the Second Death hath no Power*—. Rev. 20. 6.) but it does not free from the *latter*. It may indeed, and does, as to *this Death*, exempt from the *Curſe* and *Sting* of it; (*O Death, where is thy Sting?*) but not from the *Stroke* of it; not from the *thing it ſelf* Naturally conſidered, (as it conſiſts in the *diſſolving of the Union 'twixt Soul and Body*). Chriſt has *unſtung* Death for every Believer; the Serpent now may *hiſſe*, but it cannot *hurt*; yet it may ſting ſo far, as to put a Period to the preſent Life. 1 Cor. 15. 55.

Doe *Abrahams* die? muſt they die? Oh happy Neceſſity! bleſſed be God for it! This is grounded, not only upon their *Natural Frame* and *Conſtitution*; (as they are Fleſh and Blood as well as others, and made of the ſame brittle Materials): Nor only upon their *having Sin* as well as others; (and where that is, Death muſt follow upon it): Nor only, upon that *Univerſal Statute*, [*It is appointed unto Men once to die*]; Heb. 9. 27. — But alſo, upon the *ſpecial Love* and *Grace* of God to his People. He has prepared an Heaven for them, they are deſigned to a future State of Bleſſedneſs, ſhall be rewarded above for their Service below. Now, that they may be put into the actual Poſſeſſion of all this, they muſt die. Death, to the Saints, is but their *Tranſition* into their everlaſting Bleſſedneſs; and ſo, 'tis not their *Miſery*, but their *Felicity*, that they die. This, to the Wicked, is in *Judgment*; but to the Godly, in *Mercy*: The former die, becauſe God will glorify his *Punitive Juſtice* upon them in another World; but the Other die, becauſe God will glorify his free *Grace* and *Mercy* upon them in another World. Death ſhall come to an *Abraham*, but it comes to him as a *Friend*, not as an *Enemy*. Whilſt he is paying the indiſpenſible Tribute due to *Nature*, God is carrying on the glorious Deſigns of his *Grace* towards him. (But this I paſs over).

I proceed to the *threefold Amplification*, or to the *three Specialties* obſervable in the *Death* of *Abraham*. The firſt of which, points to the *Order*, and to the *Manner* of his Death; in this Branch.

Then Abraham [gave up the Ghoſt, and died.]

In

In the *Syriac* Verſion, 'tis, *infirmatus eſt*, he was *debilitated* and *weakened*, ſo he *died*. In the *Septuagint*; ἐκλείπων ἀπέθανεν, he *fainted*, and ſo he *died*: (thus alſo the *Chaldee Paraphraſt*, the *Vulgar*, *Oleaſter*, and divers others) * *Hierome* objects againſt this *Rendring* the Words, as if it did reflect upon ſuch a Perſon as *Abraham* to *faint*: But what Diſparagement could it be to him, at ſuch an Age, to lie under bodily Fainting? ſo long as he was not *weak in Faith*, — but *ſtrong in Faith, giving Glory to God*, (Rom. 4. 19, 20.) meer *Natural Weakneſs* could not at all reflect upon him, or be unbecoming to him.

* Malè in 70 *Interpretibus* additum eſt, [& *deficiens* Abraham *mortuus eſt*]; quia non convenit Abrahæ deficere & imminui *Quæſt. Heb.* in *Gen.*

The *Samaritan* Verſion renders it by *Expiravit*; he *expired*, breathed out his laſt Breath, or his *Soul* and *Spirit*; his Breath and Soul went out of him, ſo he died. (This Reddition is moſt generally followed by *Expoſitors*).

The [*giving up of the Ghoſt*], is the uſual Expreſſion to ſet forth Death by; ſo its uſed as to *Iſaac*, *Gen.* 35. 29. — as to *Jacob*, *Gen.* 49. 33. as to our *Saviour*, Joh. 19. 30. (*& paſſim*).

We'll conſider it, as 'tis expreſſive not only of *Abraham*'s ſimple *Dying*, but alſo of ſome *Adjuncts* and *Circumſtances* about his dying: It notes,

1. *The Order of his Dying; and what was the Antecedent to it.* *Abraham* firſt *gave up the Ghoſt*, then he *died*. Firſt the Soul departs, and then we die; and when that is once gone out of the Body, Death immediately follows. That being the *living*, *vital*, *quickning Principle* in Man; when that is once ſeparated from the Body, this muſt neceſſarily be turned into a *dead Carcaſe*, a dead lump of Clay. So long as that ſtays with us, we *live*; but when it takes its Flight from.

from us into its higher Manſion, forthwith we *die*. The diſſolving of the Union 'twixt Soul and Body, as it neceſſarily *antecedes* Death; ſo Death neceſſarily *ſucceeds* upon it. This is the *Order* of Nature, (as to what goes *before* and what follows *after*), in that which I am ſpeaking of.

By the way, let ſuch who believe, (and who thereupon are *united* unto Chriſt), rejoyce in this *ſpiritual* and *myſtical Union*: inaſmuch, as it does ſecure to them the *Perpetuity* of their *Spiritual Life*. The *Natural Union* of the two Conſtitutive Parts of Man, is *diſſoluble*; and ſo, the Natural Life that reſults from it, may *ceaſe*: But the *Spiritual Union* between Chriſt and the Believer, being *indiſſoluble*, conſequently, the Spiritual Life reſulting from it, is and ſhall be *Abiding* and *Everlaſting*. The Soul may leave the Body, therefore *that* may die; but Chriſt and the *Animating Spirit* will never leave the Soul, therefore *that* ſhall never die. How may Believers comfort themſelves from this!

2. It holds forth, the *Manner* of *Abraham's* Death.

1. *As to the Speedineſs and Eaſineſs of it.*
2. *As to his ready and willing Submiſſion to it.*

1. *His Death was quick and eaſy.* He was not *long* in Dying, did not ſtand out any *long Siege*, Death did but ſummon him, and he preſently ſurrendred up himſelf; he breathed out his laſt Breath, and the Work was done. Neither did he grapple with thoſe *ſharp Pains*, thoſe grievous *Agonies* and *Conflicts*, which many feel in a dying-hour; no, he juſt *expired*, juſt *gave up the Ghoſt*, and that was all. The *Hebrew* Word, uſed

used in the *Text*, is נרע; which the * *Rabbinical Doctors*, (and many Interpreters after them), make to import a *quick*, *speedy*, and *easy Death*.

* Dictio, *expiravit*, egressionem Spiritus è Corpore significat, quæ esse mortem, quæ Homini accidit absque ullo prævio morbo & dolore *Munster*: Expirando mortuus est, mortis quadam facilitate usus, quam εὐθανασίαν, *Vatab.* Verbum נרע, apud Hebræos dicitur de Morte sine Dolore. *Grot.* (so *Oleaster*, & quamplurimi alii.) *Calvine* rejects this Exposition.

fit subitò sine Dolore & Morâ *Aben-Ezra*. Putant Rabbini גויעה, Homini accidit absque ullo prævio morbo & dolore *Munster*:

But others observe, that we can lay no great Stress upon the *Word*, (as importing, an *easy Death* to belong to good Men; at least, not so as to be *appropriated* and limited to them): becauſe, elſe-where, we find it applied to wicked Men in their Dying. As it is, to thoſe that periſhed in the *General Deluge*, Gen. 7. 21. to *Iſhmael* himſelf, (in this *Gen.* 25. 17.)

Vid. *Pagium* in Loc.

And for the *Thing it ſelf*, *Abraham* might have this *easy Death*; but we cannot from him *conclude* that *all* Saints, and they *only*, ſhall have it. This is wholly at God's diſpoſe, who orders every Man's Death to be eaſy or painful as he pleaſes. Even the Godly ſometimes have a *rough Paſſage* to *Heaven*, while the wicked have a *calm Paſſage* to *Hell*. Do we not ſee this verified in daily Experience? the Good, dying with *ſad Groans*, ſharp *Conflicts*, acute *Pains*; and the Bad, dying like *Lambs*, having a very *ſerene* and *placid Death*? As to this, *all things fall alike to all*; and there's *no Knowledg of the Love or Hatred of God*, by it.

All that I can ſay upon it is this;

An eaſy Death is a great Mercy. *Obſerv.*

There can hardly be a *parting* of the two *old Companions*, ſuch a Violence offered to Nature, but there will be ſome *Pains* and *Difficulties* attending this; but the leſs there is of Theſe, the more there is of Mercy. This εὐθανασία, was paſſionately deſired by the *Suetan. in V. Aug.*

the Emperor *Auguſtus* for Himſelf and all his *Friends*. And indeed, it is a Bleſſing much to be deſired! provided, that this be done with *due Submiſſion* to the Will of God. We muſt not be our own Chuſers, as to the Circumſtances either of *Life* or *Death*; but in *both* entirely refer our ſelves to the Sovereign Pleaſure of God. And Chriſtian, comfort thy ſelf in this, whatever thy *Pains* may be in *Dying*, thou art ſecured from thoſe *worſer After-Pains* that will ſucceed theſe to the ungodly and unbelieving. That Death which is ſo painful to thee, for a few Minutes, Hours, or Days, when it has done its Work, will put an end to all thy Pains, and to whatever here is afflictive to thee.

2. It imports, *Abraham's readineſs and willingneſs to die.* He [*gave up the Ghoſt*], when God called for his Soul, he *freely* gave it up; there was in him no ſtriving, ſtrugling, or reluctancy; nothing but a *quiet* and *willing Reſignation* of himſelf to die. 'Twould have been ſtrange had it been otherwiſe! He that was willing, at God's Command, * *To go out of his own Country; from his Kindred and Father's Houſe, to a Land that God would ſhew him*; † *though he knew not whither he went*; ‖ *had no Inheritance in the Place, no not ſo much as to ſet his Foot upon:* I ſay, it would have been ſtrange, that he, who ſo readily complied with this Command of God, (when as to his *Earthly Intereſt* things were no better Circumſtantiated); ſhould have been backward to have complied with God's Will as to his removal from Earth, when he knew, upon this, *he ſhould be taken up into Heaven.* This was in his Eye in his removal from his Country here; [*for he looked for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe*

* Gen. 12. 1.
† Heb. 11. 8.
‖ Acts 7. 5.

whose Builder and Maker is God]; Heb. 11. 10. — But surely, he might have, and had, a more *immediate* and *proximate* view of the *Heavenly Inheritance*, in his Departure by Death, which would put him into the *present Possession* of it. No wonder therefore he should be thus *willing to die!*

A good Pattern for our Imitation!

Saints should be willing to die. *Observ.*

Thus it was with *Abraham* himself, and thus it should be with his *Seed* also. We must with the *greatest Readiness* give up the Ghost whenever God demands it. Not die, out of *Force* or *Necessity*, (because we cannot help it), but out of *Choice*, and ready *Resignation* of Life to God's Will. *Sapientis est exire, non ejici; a wise Man, is not forced out of the World, but he spontaneously goes out of it.* Sen. Ep. 30. The wicked, Oh how averse are they from Dying! (and can we blame them for it)? Their Souls are *pull'd out* of their Bodies, whether they will or no; they do not *give* them up, but they are *taken* from them; *Thou Fool, this night*, &c. *Prov.* 14. 32. [*The wicked is driven away in his Wickedness*]; (it's an Allusion to things, that are hurried away by some tempestuous Winds, quite contrary to their own Natural Inclinations): [*but the Righteous has hope in his Death*]; and upon this Hope he dies *willingly*.

Certainly they who duely consider the *Miseries* of the *present Life*, the *true Nature* of Death, the *Gain* and Advantages of it to the Upright, the * *Soveraignty* of God over Men, as to Life and Death; cannot but be *ready* and *willing* to die. Ripe Fruit, how easily does it fall into the hands of him that gathers it? Oh such who are fit to die,

* Quam præposterum est, quamq; perversum, ut cum Dei Voluntatem fieri postulemus quando evocat nos & accersit de hoc Mundo Deus, non statim Voluntatis ejus imperio pareamus. *Cyprian* de Mortal. Serm. 6.

ripe for Heaven, how readly should they fall into God's Hands when by Death he comes to gather them!

The Truth is, 'tis not enough for such *barely* to be *willing* to die, but this they should passionately, (yet not impatiently), *desire* and pant after. *Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better;* (πολλῶ μαλλον κρεῖσσον). *In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our House which is from Heaven.* —— *For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened.*

Phil. 1. 23.

2 Cor. 5. 2, 4.

So much for the *First Amplification* in the words, about *Abraham's* Death. The *Second*, is taken from the *Time* of it:

Then Abraham gave up the Ghost, and died [in a good old Age, an old Man, and full of Years.]

In a good old Age] ἐν πολιᾷ ἀγαθῇ, (*Sym.*); in an *hoary Age*; (like that of *Samuel*, *I am old and gray-headed*; 1 Sam. 12. 2.)

This, God had promised before to *Abraham*; [*Thou shalt go to thy Fathers in Peace, thou shalt be buried in a good old Age*] Gen. 15. 15; and here it was made good to him. The same is said of *David*, 1 Chron. 29. 28. of *Gideon*, Judg. 8. 32.

Object. It may here be queried, How is *Abraham* said to die *in a good old Age?* when, if we compare *his Age* with those who lived before him, it comes much short of theirs? What's an 175 Years to those *several hundreds* of Years, that the *Fathers* before the Flood arrived at? (according to what is recorded of them, *Gen.* 5.) And in the Computation of the Lives of the *Fathers* after the Flood, (*Gen.* 11.) we find all of them, (one

(one excepted, *viz. Nachor*, who lived but 148 Years) to be older than *Abraham* was?

Some answer, He is said to die in a *good old Age*, an *old Man*, not as to the *measure of his Life by Days or Years*; *but in regard of the great Progress he had made in Faith and Holiness.* A more satisfactory Answer is this; That *Abraham's* Age, *absolutely* considered, (especially at that *Time* wherein he lived, when God shortened the Lives of Men very much), was a good old Age; although it was not so, if taken *comparatively* with those that lived *before him*: And, in a *comparative* Notion too, it was so, if we compare it with the Age of them who did *succeed* him: 'Tis true, *Isaac* lived some-what longer than he; (for *his days were an 180 Years*, Gen. 35. 28.); But as to the rest of his *Issue*, and as to the Body of succeeding *Mankind*, few (if any) ever did attain to his Age. *The Days of our Years are threescore Years and ten*; Psal. 90. 10; (and not one of a thousand now live to this); *Abraham* much exceeded this Proportion; and so it may be well affirmed of him that he died in a *good old Age, an old Man, full of Years.*

Answ. Senex dicitur, non spatio dierum & Temporum, (cùm junior obierit omnibus Avis suis); sed quia sensu, Fide, Sanctimoniâ Vitæ, profecerat in immensum. *Author Cat. in Lipsm.*

From this Head, I'll raise *three* Observations.

1. *That to live to, and to die in, a good old Age, is a great Blessing.* *Observ.* 1.

It may be said to be [*a good old Age*] either,

Upon a { *Natural* and *Physical*, or a *Moral* and *Spiritual* } Account.

According to the first Consideration, 'tis either a *great* and *long* Age, or a *strong* and *healthful* Age; either *sera*, or *sana Senectus.*

1. *A great and long Age:* Namely, when a Man's Days and Years are many, when the Number of them rises very high, when he has *full measure* of them, (measure *press'd down* and *running over*). Some divide *Old Age* into *three Periods*; (according to which, they distinguish it into *First*, *Second* and *Last*): the First, they make to commence from the *60th* Year of Man; the Second, from his *70th*; and the Last from his *80th*; ἑξατογέρων; (*V. Drus. in loc.*) Now, when a Man's Life is prolong'd not only to the First and Second, but also to the Third of these Stages; surely his is a *good old Age.*

Now this is a *great Blessing:* So the Scripture represents a *long Life*, and a *late Death.* God himself makes use of it as a *Motive* to Obedience; (the Apostle turns it into a *Promise*, Eph.6.2.) *Honour thy Father*, &c. *that thy days may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*; Exod.20.12. Its Promised, —*Thou shalt come to thy Grave in a full Age, like as a Shock of Corn cometh in in his Season*; Job 5.26. —*The number of thy days, I will fulfil*; Exod. 23. 26. —You see this good old Age is promised as a Mercy: The opposite to it, is threatened as a Punishment: So in the Case of *Eli*, and his Posterity, 1 *Sam.* 2. 31. *Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine Arm, and the Arm of thy Father's House, that there shall not be an old Man in thine House.* Psal. 55. 23. — *Bloody and deceitful Men shall not live out half their days:* Job 15. 32, 33. *It shall be accomplished before his time, and his Branch shall not be green. He shall shake off his unripe Grape as the Vine, and cast off his Flower as the Olive. David* therefore deprecates this, *O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days*; Psal. 102. 24. — It's observable when God would set forth

forth the *glorious State* of the Church, in the latter days, he doth it by *this Alluſion*; Iſa. 65. 20. *There ſhall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old Man that hath not filled his days: for the Child ſhall die an hundred Years old, but the Sinner being an hundred Years old, ſhall be accurſed.*

To prove it to be a Mercy, it appears to be ſo,

1. In regard of *Others.*
2. With reſpect *to the Aged themſelves.*

1. *In regard of Others:* It's a great Mercy, to be ſerviceable and inſtrumental in the promoting of the Good of Others; 'tis that which we are all born for, have all our Graces and Gifts for; that which all ſtand obliged unto by many Bonds; that which is the higheſt Expreſſion of true Love and Charity; that which will much conduce to the ſecuring and heightning of our own Future Happineſs. This Life now being the only time for this Service, muſt it not be a great Mercy, if God will lengthen it out, and ſpare a Perſon to a good old Age? In this reſpect (and upon this account) the Life of Chriſtians here, is preferable before the glorified Life of the Saints in Heaven; inaſmuch, as here they may be ſerviceable to others, which there they cannot be. Oh the longer thy Life is continued, the more Good thou mayſt do! the more thou mayſt bring in to God, the more thou mayſt inſtruct, exhort, comfort, (and the like); and is not this Mercy? He that goes not to bed till nine or ten at night, may certainly do more Work, than one who enters upon his Repoſe early in the Morning, or at Mid-day.

And

And beſides this; Old Age does both *qualify* Perſons for Service, and alſo make their Service moſt *ſucceſsful*. 'Tis to be preſum'd, that the *Aged* have a greater Stock of * *Wiſdom*, *Experience*, than the *Younger*; and ſo are more able to *adviſe*, *convince*, *reprove*, and every way to further the Good of others. And then, upon that *Reverence* and *Veneration*, which all (but profligate Perſons) have for theſe, what they ſay, and do, comes with great † *Authority*. That *Admonition*, *Counſel* and *Reproof*, which is ſlighted as it comes from the *Young*, is received with awe when it comes from the *Aged*. An eminent ‖ Divine, (treating of this Subject) cites this Speech of one. *A few gray Hairs may be of more worth than many Locks; and a few gray Beards do more than many green Heads.* Old Age, (where 'tis not decrepit and ſuperannuated), is not the *unuſeful* and *unſerviceable* part of Man's Life (as to others); but quite the contrary.

* Mens & Ratio & Conſilium in Senibus eſt— Temeritas eſt floretis Ætatis, Prudentia Senectutis. *Tull. de Sen.*

† Apex Senectutis, Authoritas. *Tull. de Sen.*

‖ Mr. *Gataker*, Abraham's Decenſe, p. 282.

2. *With reſpect to the Aged themſelves.* The longer they are continued here, the more time they have to ſet their *Houſe in order*; to prepare for their everlaſting State; to *work out their Salvation*; to lay a *good Foundation for Eternal Life*; to get clear Evidences for Heaven. The longer the Fruit hangs upon the Tree, the riper it grows; 'twould be ſad, if they who live long, ſhould not be *full ripe* for Glory when they die. Upon this *twofold* Conſideration, its a great *Bleſſing* to live to *a good old Age*.

Iſa. 38. 1. Phil. 2. 12. 1 Tim. 6. 19.

2. Let's conſider it, as it ſpeaks *a ſtrong and healthful old Age*. *Abraham* dyed in a * *good old Age*; though he was old, yet he was *hail*, *vegete*, and *vigorous*; not

* *i. e.* Proſperâ valetudine, habuit faciem Senectam. *P. Martyr.* Vid. *Oleaſt. Piſcat.* Senectute bonâ, *i. e.* quæ aliena à malis & incommodis Senectutis. *Varabl.*

bowed

bowed down with those Infirmities that usually attend old Age. Some are Old when Young, others Young when Old; their *Senses*, Parts, are as *vivid* and fresh as ever. We have two famous *Instances* of this εὐγηρία, in Holy Writ: That of *Moses*, Deut. 34. 7. *And* Moses *was an hundred and twenty Years old when he died: his Eye was not dim, nor his natural Force abated.* And that of *Caleb*, Josh. 14. 10, 11. *And now behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, and he said, these fourty and five Years, even since the Lord spake this word unto* Moses, *while the Children of* Israel *wandered in the Wilderness: and now lo, I am this day fourscore and five Years old. As yet I am as strong this day, as I was in the day that* Moses *sent me: as my Strength was then, even so is my Strength now, for War, both to go out, and to come in.* Profane † History abounds in variety of Examples of it; (but I'll make no Citation of them).

† Val. Max. l. 8. c. 13. Cic. de Sen. Drusus says of himself, Cui Senectus melior quam ipsa Juventus.

Now that this is a great Blessing, needs no Proof. To be *full of Years*, and yet free from the Diseases, Pains, Weaknesses, which are the common Retinue of old Age; it admits not of the least Doubt but that this is an eminent Mercy. Some bring the fore-cited Promise, *Job* 5. 26. unto this; *Thou shalt come to thy Grave in a full Age*, i. e. *full of Strength and Health; thine old Age shall not be a troublesome Age; thou shalt not be weak and crazy, distempered and sick, a Burthen to thy Self and Friends; but shalt die in a lusty old Age:* It's promised us as a Mercy (you see), and it must be own'd to be so.

Mr. Caryl in Loc.

This for the *Natural* and *Physical* Notion of a *good old Age!* But then,

2. There is the *Moral* and *Spiritual* Notion of it. And so it may be said to be good, either in respect of

of *Grace*, or of *Peace* and *Comfort*: when 'tis a vertuous, religious pious *old Age*, or a peaceable and comfortable *old Age* (the Soul having the Peace of God and Divine Joy in it); this is, *truly*, **eminently*, a *good old Age*; and that which is peculiar to Good Men.

* *Tenendum est —præcipuam partem bonæ senectutis in bonâ conscientiâ, animo sereno & tranquillo consistere. Unde sequitur, nonnisi in veros justitiæ cultores competere quod Deus* Abrahæ *promittit.* Calv.

In both respects, *Abraham*'s old Age was good. First, as it succeeded an *holy* and *well-spent Life*; and then, as ‖ *Discedens in Gratiâ*, Lyra. *it self* was filled up with ‖ *Grace* and *Holiness*; (for, according to the Promise, *Psal.* 92. 14. *He brought forth Fruit in his old Age.*) And Secondly, † as in it, he enjoyed much inward *Serenity* of *Mind*, and Peace of Conscience. This he had, this he died with; so he died *in a good old Age.*

† *Expirare & mori in Senectute bonâ, est placide mori, & excessu dulcissimo hanc vitam finire.* Rivet.

If we state it thus, Does it not carry much Mercy in it? In a *full Age*, (when Death is making its near Approaches); for any then to be able to reflect upon a good and gracious Life; to appeal to God (as *Hezekiah* did), *Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is good in thy Sight.* 'Lord, I have not lived a vain and wicked Life, 'thou knowest; I have not spent my best Age in Folly 'and Vanity, all my days I have endeavoured to live 'in thy Fear, it has been my great Design all along to 'glorify thee in my Conversation, to do Good to Men, 'to serve my Generation: And now I am old, yet 'still I keep my Integrity, still I love thee, and fear to 'sin against thee; still (to the utmost of my Strength) 'I am for Prayer, Meditation, hearing the Word, all 'Religious Exercises: Oh good and blessed old Age!

Isa 38. 3.

Is

Is not the *end of this Man, Peace?* does he not leave the World, and go off the Stage *full of Comfort* (as well as *full of Days*)? Does he not now find the ſweet of his Sincerity, (paſt and preſent)? To die in *ſuch an old Age*, is Mercy indeed!

Conſcientiæ bene actæ vita, multorumque bene factorum recordatio, jucundiſſima eſt. Tull. de Sen.

Long Life and old Age, *ſimply* and *abſtractly* conſidered, are not ſo great a Bleſſing as to make a Perſon bleſſed; *For the Sinner of an hundred Years old ſhall be accurſed*; Iſa. 65. 20. Take them thus, they do but aggravate Men's *Guilt* here, and *Condemnation* hereafter. Ah but when they are attended with ſerious Piety and Goodneſs, then there is a great Bleſſedneſs in them, and a greater Reſulting from them. As the Wiſe Man ſtates it, (as to the Honour of old Age); *An hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteouſneſs*; Prov. 16. 31. So we muſt ſtate it, (as to the thing in hand.) Long Life, Old Age is a Mercy, *if it be found in the way of Righteouſneſs*: if not, what ever it may be in it ſelf, as conſider'd Abſolutely, to the *Perſon*, Eventually, it will have more of Judgment than of Mercy in it.

USE.

Let me a little apply this Point.

1. To the *Aged*. Have any here liv'd to this *good old Age?* You can number 70, 80, ſome (may be) more Years? you have had a *long Leaſe* of Life, and 'tis not yet expired? Pray, *look upon this as a great Bleſſing, and own it to be ſo.* Let it not be burdenſome to you, be not *querulous* and *impatient* under it; but thankful, bleſſing God that he has ſpared you ſo long. Old Age *all deſire*, (all would live long); and yet

[Senectutem] ut adipiscantur, omnes optant; eandem accusant adepti. *Cic.* de Sen.

the most *when they have it, are discontented and disturb'd at it:* this is not ingenuous; let it not be so therefore with you. You are apt to judg of it by the *outward Inconveniences* and *Hardships* that attend it; (and these render it afflictive to you): 'Whereas your 'should judg rather *by this*; Oh what a large space of 'Time have I had, for the honouring of God, doing 'good to Men, and saving my own Soul! Oh when 'thousands and thousands about me have been cut off, 'in the first blossomings of their Age, or as soon as 'they were grown up to Maturity, (and so hurried 'into their Everlasting Estate; I am yet spared to 'make further and better Preparation for Eternity! I say, would you but judg by *such Considerations* as these, they would prevent Impatience, and promote Thankfulness in you to God, for lengthening out your Lives so long.

Menand. in *Plutarch.*

It was the Saying of one, ὃν φιλεῖ θεὸς, ἀποθνήσκει νέος; *he whom God loves, dies when he is young:* I cannot assent to this Assertion without some stating and qualifying of it. 'Tis true, when God is bringing *great Evils* upon a Family, or a Kingdom, then to be taken away *young*, (in order to being preserved from such Evils), does carry the Love and Mercy of God in it; (as we see in the Instance of *Jeroboam*'s Son, 1 *Kings* 14. 12, 13. and of good *Josiah*, 2 *Kings* 22. 20.) But to make this Proposition *general* and *universal*, that we have no ground for. He that promises long Life as a Mercy, must be look'd upon as loving the Persons to whom he vouchsafes it.

That which makes *old Age* to be so generally burdensome, and which causes Inquietude of Mind in Persons under it; is, *the many Afflictive Evils that accompany*

pany it. Within, there's a ſad Decay in the ſeveral Faculties of the Soul; (the *Underſtanding* darkened, the *Reaſon* clouded, the *Memory* blunted, the *Affections* dead and flat). *Without*, there are various Infirmities in the Body; the *Eyes* dim, the *Ears* deaf, the *Feet* lame, the *Joynts* benum'd, the *Hands* tremble, the *Bones* full of Aches, the *whole Body* a Maſs of Diſeaſes: what an Accumulation of Evils is here! Hence old Age is commonly called, *Ætas mala*, the *evil Age*: And *Solomon* ſpeaks of it, *as ſuch*; Eccleſ. 12. 1. *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy Youth, while the evil days come not, nor the Years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them.* (He firſt in *general* calls it the *evil Days*, and then *particularly*, in the following Verſes, he moſt elegantly ſets it forth, in the Decay of the ſeveral Parts of the Body).

O quam continuis, & quantis plena Senectus,
Longa malis! Juv.
Multa ſenem circumveniunt incommoda. Hor.

Now, can any be patient under the Conflux of ſuch Evils? much more, can any be thankful to God, for extending their Lives to an Age which expoſes them to ſuch Diſcomforts?

Anſw. They may, and they ought to be ſo. You that feel all theſe, reflect upon what is paſt. How many Years did you live in Health and Strength? how long was it before it was thus bad with you? And ſhould not the weighing of *paſt Mercy*, quiet you under *preſent Afflictions*? When all the Day has been fair, can you not bear a ſhowre at the Evening? When your Way has been good in your whole Journy, can

you not ſubmit to a little ſpot of bad Way, when you are juſt at the end of your Journey? This calls for Patience and Thankfulneſs from you.

And beſides, you are to conſider the *preſent Good*, as well as the *preſent Evils*, that attend your old Age. Ye are not yet *wholly* unſerviceable; ſomething yet you can do, for the Good of others, and for the ſaving of your own Souls. All theſe Calamities do but ſet you nearer to Heaven; every Wave drives your nearer to the Shore; every Wind is but for the throwing down
2 Cor. 5. 1. of the *Earthly Tabernacle*, that you may aſcend to that *Houſe, that Building of God which is eternal in the Heavens.* So that, upon a *ſpiritual account*, you have no reaſon to be impatient, or to find fault with your old
* Georgias Leontinus, *in Val. Max. l. 8. c. 13.* Age; but to carry it like that * Aged Perſon (that we read of), who being an 107 Years old, and being asked, *Why he would be willing to live ſo long?* anſwered, *Quia nihil habeo propter quod Senectutem meam accuſem; I undergo nothing for which I have cauſe to blame my old Age.* Do but you conſider the *whole matter*, and you'll have more reaſon to ſay the ſame.

Tull. de Sen. The Orator objects *Four Evils* in old Age:

1. *It diſables for Buſineſs and Work.*
2. *It renders the Body infirm and ſickly.*
3. *It deprives of all Pleaſures.*
4. *It brings near to Death.*

The Vanity and Weakneſs of all theſe Imputations upon old Age, he particularly makes out with great clearneſs and ſtrength of Reaſon.

When Heathens have ſuch ſound Notions of this, ſhall we Chriſtians entertain falſe Notions of it? Oh where

where God has bleſſed any of you with it, do not murmur at it, and give way to Diſcontent, but heartily bleſs him for it.

2. Is it *a good old Age*, not only for the *length* of it, but alſo for the *Strength* and *Healthfulneſs* of it? where 'tis ſo, ſurely *there muſt be great Thankfulneſs*. To live *ſo long*, and yet to be *ſtrong* and *vigorous*? free from thoſe Infirmities of Age that have been inſtanced in? Nature yet keeps up its youthful Vigor? there's nothing in the Senſes, Organs, Limbs, Faculties of the Mind, to ſhew that old Age is upon Perſons: nothing but only the hoary Head? Oh what Mercy is this! Whether we conſider, the *Paucity* of them that have it; or the *Advantage* reſulting from it for Service. This is very good, not only becauſe it's *delightful* and *comfortable* to him who has it; but becauſe it renders him *ſerviceable* to God and Man! Alas! the *old, decrepit, decay'd* Man, here lives, and that's all; his time of Service is over, (in a great meaſure); he's laid by like the Ship that's worn out, unfit to go to Sea any more. Ah! but he that is old, and yet hail and *luſty*, that retains his former *Vivacity* (of Body and Soul); he's as fit for Service as ever, as uſeful in his Station as ever; a wonderful Mercy! What would ſome zealous Chriſtians give for it! If you have it, I beſeech you prize it, improve it, and be very thankful for it.

3. But thirdly, Is it *a good old Age* in the *moral* Notion of it? *Here is the higheſt Obligation to Praiſe and Thankfulneſs*. Can you take a view of your ſelves in the former Stages of your Lives, that in all of them you have feared God and walk'd with him? that all along you have been good, and done Good? that Holineſs and Obedience have run through your whole Converſation?

tion? And that now, in the last Period of your Days, yet you hold on in the good ways of God? yet you are acting Grace? yet bringing *forth Fruit unto Holiness?* yet your Works are good? nay, your *last* Works are your *best*? better *filled up* than formerly? Oh, where 'tis thus with any of you, rejoyce, rejoyce! call upon *your Souls* and *all within you*, to bless God for his rich Grace displaid towards you! Here's *good old Age* indeed! (Oh that there was more of it in the World)! Well, here's *living* to, and in a *good old Age*; 'twill not be long before it will be *dying* in this good old Age: And how safe, how sweet will that Dying be unto you whenever it shall come! (so much to the *Aged*).

Rom. 6. 22. Rev. 3. 2.

Psal. 39. 5. Job 21. 14.

2. Something I would say to the *Young*: To you who are in your *best State*, in the prime of your Days; whose Bones are *full of Marrow*, and whose Candle *burns very bright*. Old Age has not as yet seiz'd upon you, but you are hastening to it; the *Shadows of the Evening* are every Minute drawing nearer and nearer to you. That which I would urge upon you, is, that you would so order your Course now, in the time of your Youth and Manhood, as that when old Age shall come, it may be to you a *good old Age*, both living and dying. Indeed, 'tis very uncertain whether you shall ever arrive at it, (as I shall shew by and by); but possibly it may please God to continue you here so long: Oh! let it be your great Care and Endeavour to provide now, (if it shall be so), that it may prove an happy and blessed Age to you.

Jer. 6. 4.

How is this to be effected?

Why, *Remember your Creator in the days of your Youth*; close with God *betimes*, make an *early Dedication* of your selves to God, let him have the *First-Fruits*

Eccles. 12. 1.

Fruits of your Times; now engage in serious and universal Piety; fill up your greener Age with Grace and Holiness: Thus do, and then 'twill be a *good old Age* in the winding up of all. The way to *end well*, is to *begin well*; and so to hold on in what is good. If the *Youth* and *Manhood* have been vain and sinful, it cannot well be expected that the *old Age* will be holy, and comfortable: (what God may do in the Soveraignty of his Grace, who converts when he pleases, I do not meddle with; I only speak of what may *probably* and *rationally* be expected.) The Fruits which do not set well in Spring, seldom come to any good Maturity in Autumn; so 'tis here. Besides the *Disingenuity* of putting off Vertue and Goodness to your old Age; (for what is that but in effect to say, that your worst is good enough for God? that Sin and the World shall have your *Flower*, and God have only your *Bran*? that they shall have the first Broachings of the Vessel, and God only the Dregs and Lees?) I say, besides the disingenuousness of this towards God, 'tis a thing that will prove highly *injurious* and *fatal* to your Lives: For, *if you be not good at the first, 'twill be hard for you to be so at the last.* Oh! let God and Godliness have all your Time! make him the *Alpha* and the *Omega* of your Days; let the whole Web of Life be spun with even Thread; walk in an *uniform Course* of Obedience; let it be *good Youth, good Manhood, good old Age*, all good. (This is a vast Argument, it must not expaciate upon it.)

Non tantùm minimum in imo, sed pessimum remanet, *Sen.*

I go on to a *Second* Observation.

None live so long, but at last they die.

Abraham here had lived 175 Years, (a great Age!) but then *he died*: The longest Day will have its Night: There

There will be the ſetting of the Sun, as well as the riſing of it; (tho ſometimes 'tis very late before it ſets). There's none continue ſo long upon the Stage, but they go off at laſt. The Glaſs that has but the ordinary Proportion of Sand in it, is ſoon run out; ſuppoſe there ſhould be another with a far greater Proportion, yet even that too, by continual running, at laſt would be empty: So ſome Mens Time is ſoon run out, there's a ſpeedy Period put to their Lives; Others hold out, and hold up a longer time; but yet they too fall and die at laſt. The *Ante-Diluvian* Fathers lived very long, yet they died; of every one of them (*Enoch* only excepted) it's ſaid, *And he died*; Gen. 5. 5, *&c.*

Not to enlarge upon a Point ſo plain and indubitable, let me ſubjoyn but a word of Advice:

Uſe. 1. *To the Old.* How does it concern ſuch, *always to be expecting and prepared for Death!* This ſhould be done by the Young, but much more by the Aged; becauſe of their more *uncertain State* as to Life. Oh *how near are old Age and Death to each other!* there's but a ſmall diſtance betwixt the *hoary Head* and the *ſlimy Grave*; that which *David* ſaid of himſelf, [*there is but a ſtep between me and Death,*] every old Man may apply to himſelf. The Young *may die*, the Old *muſt die*: Death lies in *Ambuſh* for the Young, but it *openly* ſhews it ſelf to the Ancient; *Senibus in Januis, Adoleſcentibus in inſidiis*; Bern. There's but a little Sand left in their Glaſs, but a little Oil to keep their Lamps burning; their Leaſe is now almoſt expired; (and what follows but a Writ of Ejectment?) It's Folly in any to dream of long Life; but this would be prodigious Folly in you, to whom the Reſidue of Life is ſo ſmall: (And yet the Orator tells

1 Sam. 20. 3.

us,

us, *There's none ſo old but he thinks he may live one Year longer*). It being thus, how ſhould you live in a *conſtant Expectation* of Death? how ſhould you be always *ready* and *prepared* for it? What! after you have had ſo *long a Space* to prepare for your Change, yet to be unprepared? what, to be neither fit *to live*, nor fit *to dy*? not fit for work, (becauſe your Strength is gone,) nor fit for Wages, (becauſe not ripe for Heaven)? what a diſmal Caſe is this! Oh therefore be always ready! that when you come to dy, you may have nothing to do but *juſt to dy*, and to go to God.

Nemo eſt tam ſenex quî ſe annum non putet poſſe vivere.

2. Does this Counſel concern the Aged only? no, *it reaches to others alſo.* For do not the Young die as well as the Old? *Verily, every Man at his beſt State is altogether Vanity*, Pſal. 39. 5. *One dieth in his full Strength, being wholly at eaſe and quiet*, Job 21. 23. There are in the Grave the Skulls and Bones of Infants, Youths, ſtrong Men, as well as of the Aged. *The old Aſſe often carries the Skin of the young one to the Market*, (according to the *Jewiſh* Proverb). * Who can aſſure himſelf (be he never ſo young) that he ſhall live *a Day*? much leſs that he ſhall live to *old Age*? What is Life more in the Young than in the Old? 'tis but a *Breath* in both; and that, God can ſtop as ſoon in the one as in the other. *Omnes eodem cogimur*, we are all going the *ſame Way*, and muſt all tread in the ſame *Common-Path*. Death puts no Difference betwixt the Weak and the Strong. The new-built Houſe ſometimes falls, when the old one ſtands. Wherefore it lies upon *you*, that are young, to look and prepare for Death, as well as upon the Eldeſt. Oh that you would be wiſe *to conſider your latter End!* that you would *ſo number your Days as to apply your Hearts to Wiſdome!*

* Quis eſt tam ſtultus, quamvis ſit Adoleſcens, cui ſit exploratum ſe ad veſperam eſſe victurum. *Cic.* de Sen.

Deut. 32. 29. *Pſal.* 90. 12.

dome! Do not *procraſtinate* and delay what you have to do, (preſuming upon living long, and old Age; which is the higheſt Folly, and the moſt groundleſs Imagination): But *to day, whileſt it is called to day*, repent, believe, make ſure of Chriſt, get your Peace made with God, (and the like). And then let Death come as ſoon as it will, 'twill be an happy Death to you.

[And full.]

V. 'Ainſworth *in loc.*

In the Original there is no more. 'Tis an uſual *Elipſis* in the Hebrew; *Pſal.* 73. 10. *Waters* [*of a full*] *are wrung out to them*; (i. e. *of a full Cup*). And ſo here.

Satur, accumulatus omnibus bonis & divitiis. P. *Mart.*

Some fill it up, *Abraham* died *full* of *Riches, Wealth, Honour*, and all *earthly Proſperity*: (As it's ſaid of *David, He died in a good old Age, full of Days, Riches and Honour*; 1 Chron. 29. 28.) Others thus; *Full of Grace*, of *Faith*, of *good Work*: (a much *better Fulneſs* than the former)! But the moſt fill it up, as here we do, *full* of *Years*, or *Days*, πλησὸς ἡμερῶν, *Sept.* (and ſo in divers other *Verſions*).

The ſame is affirm'd of *Iſaac*, Gen. 35. 29. of *David*, 1 Chron. 23. 1. — 29. 28. of *Jehojada*, 2 Chron. 24. 15. — of *Job*, chap. 42. 17. — The Prophet uſes this Expreſſion, *Ier.* 6. 11. — *The Aged, with him that is full of Days.*

But this (according to *Expoſitors*) is ſaid of *Abraham*, not only as expreſſive of the *many Days* and *Years* that he had lived; (with reſpect to which, it falls in with what precedes, and is but a repeating of the ſame Matter; [*he died in a good old Age, an old Man, and full of Years*]: But it alſo intimates what was the *Temper*

per of his Mind, the inward Frame and Working of his Soul, as to Life; (and ſo it carries diſtinct Matter in it). He was *full of Years*, i. e. he was * *ſatiated* with Life, *ſatisfied* with the Time he had lived; he had lived long, and now he deſired to live no longer; he had his *Fill* of the *natural Life*, (as one has of Meat and Drink, when he has been at a Feaſt); he was very willing to have a Period now put to it.

* Saturatus diebus ſuis. *V. Syr.* Saturatus ætate. *V. Arab.* Ut non appeteret vitæ prorogationem: *Calv. Oleaſt.*

Pertæſum eſt eum vitæ, mortem optavit: *Zwingl.* Noluiſſet ulterius dies ſuos pertrahi: P. *Mart.* Hebraiſmus eſt, pro Saturata erat anima ejus; non cupiebat diutius vivere, nec dies ſuos innovari. *Fagius.*

Hence note, that

A gracious Man, (a true Child of Abraham*), after he has been here his appointed Time, and done the Work allotted to him; has enough of Life, ſo as not to deſire to live any longer.* Obj.

Jacob, when he had ſeen *Joſeph*, thought he had lived long enough; *Now let me die* (ſays he), *ſince I have ſeen thy Face, becauſe thou art yet alive*, Gen. 46. 30. *Simeon*, having had a Sight of Chriſt, was very willing to die; *Lord now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in Peace, for mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation.* Thus it is, thus (to be ſure) it ought to be, with every true Chriſtian.

I put in, [*when his appointed Time is come, and his Work done*], for the better ſtating of the Point. Till *theſe* be accompliſhed, Life can never be *too long*; when theſe are accompliſh'd, Life can never be *too ſhort*. When a good Man is convinced, 'tis God's Will to tranſlate him into another World, and that his Work is done in this; *Oh* (ſays he) *let me die, I have enough of Life!*

Here's one great *Difference* betwixt the People of God and other Men. The wicked are always desiring *Continuation* of Life; as knowing, whenever that shall end, all their *Pleasures of Sin* are over, and everlasting Punishments shall succeed in their room. The worldly too, are upon the same lock; as knowing, here is their *Portion*, that they have their *good things here.* And therefore, as they have insatiable Desires after the having more of earthly Things, so also after the protracting of that Life, in which those earthly things are to be enjoyed. If these might have their Will, they would never die, but live on *in infinitum.* They may indeed sometimes be *impatient* of Life; but they never are, (upon good Grounds, and in a right manner), *satiated* with Life. Ah! but such who are sincere with God, this is their Frame and Temper: Does God say, *you shall live no longer?* they answer, *Lord, we have enough of Life, let us die.*

Luke 16. 25.

Some *Heathens* have gone very far in this; *I have lived* (says * one) *as long as suffices, I am all for Death.* And † another, *If some God would grant me to grow young again, I would by no means accept of it; I would be loth, having run my Race, to begin all again.* If these (by the improvement of Reason and natural Light) went thus far; surely they, who have an higher Light, do not come short of them: and what (I fear) in them was but *Words*, by the Saints is really put in *Practice.*

* Vixi quantum satis erat, mortem plenus expecto. *Sen.*

† Si quis Deus mihi largiatur, ut ex hâc ætate repuerascam, & incunis vagiam, valde recusem; nec velim, quasi decurso spatio, a calce ad carceres revocari. *Cato in Tull.* de Sen.

And in these, the *Grounds* of their *Satiety of Life*, are to be considered. This does not result, meerly from the *Troubles*, *Losses*, *Crosses* that here they meet with; but from something of an higher Nature. They are convinc'd of the *Vanity* of things below, that there's an Emptiness in what this World affords; that

there's

there's nothing here juſtly to make them *fond of Life*: That ſo long as *Life* continues, *Sin* will continue: That there is an *higher* and *better Life* to ſucceed, (which cannot be enjoyed till this expire): That 'tis firſt *Dying*, and then *being with God*. Upon theſe Grounds, gracious Souls are even *glutted* with this Life, and care not how ſoon they are depriv'd of it.

Uſe. Well, let us ſhew our ſelves to be *Abraham's Seed* in this, in our being *ſatiated with Life*: He is an excellent Chriſtian who is ſo, but there are but few who are ſo.

Rarus qui exacto contentus tempore vitæ,
Cedat uti conviva ſatur——. Hor.

Should God meaſure out but a ſhort Duration of Life to us, yet that ſhould *ſatisfy* us, as being long enough. But much more ſhould he grant a liberal Proportion of it, we have no reaſon to deſire more. True, in reſpect of *Work* and *Service*, we ſhould think Life never to be *long enough*: (He ſaid well who ſaid, *I have lived enough to Nature, enough to my own Reputation, but not enough to my Country.* He ſpeaks much better who ſays, *I have lived enough to Nature, enough to my Self, but not enough to my God*). But when we have *good Grounds* to conclude, our Work is finiſh'd, God has no more for us to do; it becomes us to ſay, *We have our full of Life*, we would not live a day, an hour, a moment longer: (*Not becauſe its bitter to us to live, but becauſe 'tis unneceſſary for us to live*). 'Twould be an Act of * *ſingular Grace* from God, if, by his Spirit, he would bring us to this bleſſed Temper!

Vixi ſatis Naturæ, ſatis Gloriæ, non ſatis Patriæ.

Non acerbum jam judicant vivere ſed ſuperfluum. *Sen.* Ep. 24.

* Singularis eſt Dei Gratia, vita ſaturitas, ut ex eâ migrare parati ſumus cum Animi Tranquillitate, &c. *Rivet* in loc.

I have diſpatch'd the two *firſt Amplifications* about *Abraham's Death*, from the *Manner*, and the *Time* of it; let me add a little upon the *Third*, viz. the *Iſſue* and *Conſequent* of it. He died, what became of him after that? why,

He was gathered to his People.

This, like the preceding Expreſſions, (of *giving up of the Ghoſt*, dying *in a good old Age*, being *full of Years*), does often occur in Scripture. 'Tis uſed of *Iſaac*, Gen. 35. 29. of *Jacob*, Gen. 49. 33. of *Aaron*, Numb. 20. 24. (of many otheres). Sometimes 'tis expreſſed by being *Gathered to their Fathers: I will gather thee to thy Fathers* (ſays God to *Joſiah*) 2 *Kings* 22.20. And alſo, *all that Generation were gathered unto their Fathers*, Judg. 2. 10. *David* was *laid unto his Fathers*, Acts 13. 36. The Promiſe to *Abraham* was, *Thou ſhalt go to thy Fathers* — Gen. 15. 15. — We read again and again, of *ſleeping with their Fathers*; 1 Kings 11. 43. 1 Kings 2. 10. (*& paſſim*).

It's an uſual *Hebraiſm* to ſet forth, entring into *the State of the Dead*. There's a kind of εὐφημισμὸς in it; it being a more ſoft and pleaſing Deſcription of that State, inſtead of that which is more rough and harſh.

The *Grave* being the *common Receptacle* of all that die; (*All go unto one place*, Eccleſ. 3. 20. *I know that thou wilt bring me unto Death, and to the Houſe appointed for all living*; Job 30. 23): therefore, though *Abraham* died and was buried in *Canaan*, where * *Sarah* only was buried, and none of his Progenitors; yet, upon his Death and Burial, he's ſaid *to be gathered to his People*, (or *Fathers*).

* Gen. 25. 10.

The

The *Papists* Gloss upon it is, he went to the *Limbus Patrum*. Their Doctrine is, that the *Fathers*, and all the *Old-Testament-Saints*, (who lived and died before the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ), were not *immediately* taken up into Heaven, but shut up together in some secret *Recesses* or *Caverns* of th e Earth, till Christ should come, and suffer, and rise again; and *then* they were to be admitted into the Heavenly Glory. And they tell us, that these *Fathers* and others, in *this State*, did not feel any *Pæna Sensus*, (as they in *Purgatory* do); but only *Pæna Damni*, in their not having the *immediate Presence of God and the Beatifick Vision*. And amongst other Proofs that they give of this, my * *Text*, (with other parallel Texts), is insisted upon for one: *Abraham was gathered to his People*, i. e. he was not presently translated into Heaven, but for a time shut up in a *common Cell* (with the rest who died before him), as only an *Expectant* of Heaven. And hence they observe, a *Variation* of Words, in the setting forth of the Death of those who died *since Christ came*, and of those who died *before Christ came*: The former are said *to die in the Lord*, to *sleep in Jesus*, (and the like); but the latter, are said to be *gathered to their People*, to *sleep with their Fathers*; (and so on).

toris Domini Resurrectionem transferendus ad Paradisum felicitatis æternæ. So *Lyranus*, *P. Burgensis*, in Gen. 49. 33. *Bellarmin.* de Animâ Christi, *Galat. Arcan.* lib. 6. c. 7.

* *Apponi ad Populum suum*, est consociari. Non in majorum Sepulturâ juxta corpus, sed perduci juxta Animam ad consortium Animarum Patrum illius, quæ erant in pœnis tenebrarum usq; ad discensum Filii Dei ad Inferos, &c. & post Salvatoris Domini Resurrectionem transferendus ad Paradisum felicitatis æternæ. So *Lyranus*, *P. Burgensis*, in Gen. 49. 33. *Bellarmin.* de Animâ Christi, *Galat. Arcan.* lib. 6. c. 7. *Lipsm* in loc. *Cap.* 11. *Pet.*

This Opinion we reject, as having no solid Foundation in the Word of Truth: And hold, that as all Believers who now die do *immediately* enter into Glory; (for *the Spirit returns to God who gave it*, Eccles. 12. 7. *To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*; Luke 23. 43. *We know, that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle*

Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a Building of God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens; 2 Cor. 5. 1.) So, that all who lived before Chriſt, and believed in him, did alſo, upon their Dying, *immediately enter into Glory.* Chriſt being the *ſame* to *Them*, that he is to *Us*, Heb. 13. 8; his *Merit* extending to Them as well as to Us, (he being *the Lamb ſlain from the Foundation of the World*; Rev. 13. 8); and They *believing* in the *Meſſiah to come*, as well as we believe in him *as come*; what reaſon can be aſſigned, why they ſhould not partake of the *ſame Bleſſings*, the *ſame Happineſs*, that we *now* partake of? and conſequently, upon Death, be put into the *immediate Poſſeſſion* of the Glory of Heaven, even aswe are?

See this Limbus Patrum *refuted, and the Proteſtant Doctrine defended, in* Rivet. in Gen. Exercit. 151. *Idem.* ſumma controv. Qu. 42. *Raynold.* Cenſura libr. Apochryph. Præl. 79, &c. *Chamier.* Panſtrat. *t.* 3. *l.* 25. *c.* 5, &c.

But bleſſed *Abraham!* was it thus with thee? was this thy *gathering to thy People* to be ſhut up in ſome *dark Caverns* of the Earth, (God knows where)? and to be kept out of Heaven, (God knows how long)? In thy Life, at God's Command, thou wenteſt thou knoweſt not whither; and at thy Death too, didſt thou go thou knoweſt not whither? Waſt thou the *great Inſtance* of Faith, the *Father of the Faithful?* and yet does it fare better with the meaneſt of *thy Seed* now, than it did with thy Self? Was Heaven ſo much in thy Eye, didſt thou *look for a City which had Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God*; and yet ſo long kept out of it, and thruſt into ſome Recluſe *whoſe Builder and Maker is Man?* Is thy * *Boſome* made uſe of to repreſent *Heaven*; and that before Chriſt died; and yet waſt thou not as yet in Heaven? Bleſſed Saint! theſe things we poor dim-ſighted Proteſtants, know not how to underſtand!

Rom. 4. 3.

Heb 11. 10.

* *So* Auſtin *expounds it*, Quæſt. Evang. *l.* 2. *c.* 28. & in Ep. ad Evodium. So *Muldonate* in loc. (*who yet to ſave himſelf, is fain to ſay*, Non quod *Abraham* in Cœlo eſſet; ſed quòd ita loqui fingatur, quaſi eſſet in Cœlo.

The

The Adverſay has led me out of my way, I return to the words; which I ſhall conſider not only as a *Periphraſis of Death*, or of the *dead State* that follows upon it; but as holding forth ſomething of a far higher nature: As namely, that *Abraham's Soul*, as ſoon as Death had ſeized upon his Body, was *forthwith tranſlated into the Fellowſhip and Society of the glorified Saints, who lived and died before him.*

Two things *Expoſitors* infer from them.

1. *The Exiſtence of the Soul in its ſeparated State from the Body.* They apply *Abraham's* being *gathered to his People*, to his *Soul*; and from thence aſſert, the *Exiſtence* and *Immortality* of it. And whereas ſome affirm, that in all the Books of *Moſes* there's nothing ſaid, to prove the *Soul's Immortality*; * *Cajetan* confutes them from this very Text: And many † others concur with him therein.

2. *The Advancement and Felicity of the Soul upon its Separation from the Body*, which conſiſts in this, that it is preſently *joyned with*, and *admitted into*, *the Society of the glorified Souls that are with God in Heaven.*

* In Loc.
† *Vatab. Pererius* in Gen. 25 Tom. 4. Diſp. 8. *pag.* 789, &c. *Ainſworth. Theodoret.* Q. 109. in Gen.

I muſt not engage in the diſcuſſing of theſe Heads; in brief take this Obſervation.

That whenever the Godly die, immediately they are tranſlated unto the Society of the glorified Saints in Heaven.

We cannot ground this, *merely* upon the Phraſe of *Abraham's being gathered to his People*; but we muſt alſo take in the *Grace* and *Holineſs* of the *Subject*. It's ſaid of *Iſhmael* here (*ver.* 17.) *He was gathered to his People*; but how? not as *Abraham* was, becauſe he was a

bad Man. The Sence of the Words muſt be ſtated, according to the * *Subject* to whom they are applied: When the Wicked die they are *gathered to their People*, i. e. they are thrown into the Company of the Damned in Hell: But when the Godly die, they are *gathered to their People*, i. e. taken up into the Company of the glorified Saints in Heaven.

* Ad fœlicitatem per ſe non pertinet, ſed tantùm pro *Subjectorum* ratione intellecta. *Rivet.*

It's foretold and promiſed, *Mat.* 8. 11. *That many ſhall come from the Eaſt and Weſt, and ſhall ſit down with Abraham, and Iſaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven.* Hebr. 12. 22, 23. *But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels: to the General Aſſembly, and Church of the Firſt-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect: And to Jeſus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of ſprinkling, that ſpeaketh better Things than that of Abel.* The firſt Intendment of the Apoſtle in this Scripture, was to deſcribe the *Goſpel-Church* as 'tis here on Earth, in the *Glory* and *Priviledges* thereof. One of which is this, that under the Goſpel, *Saints on Earth have Communion with the Saints in Heaven*; (all making up but one Body, or one Aſſembly): But yet ſo, as that the Things (here ſpoken) have their fulleſt Accompliſhment in the *Church triumphant.* When any are taken up into *that Church*, they go indeed to the *City of the living God*, the *heavenly Jeruſalem, an innumerable Company of Angels, the Church of the Firſt-born, the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect.* And this is the Portion of all that fear, love and obey God, whenever Death removes them hence. Luke 16. 22. *And it came to paſs that the Beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into* Abraham's *Boſom.*

And

And is it thus? then (1.) *What an incentive is this to Godliness! Abraham* died *in a good old Age*, (an old Age which succeeded a pious and well-spent Life); what followed upon it? he *was gathered to his People*; admitted into the Society of the Blessed in Heaven. Now as we desire to partake of his *happy End*, we must conform to his *holy Course*. Let us shew our selves to be *his Children* by the *doing of his Works*; Let us *believe*, *obey*, *live* as he did, and then we shall be *Heirs with him* of this, and all that other Blessedness, which he now possesses. To be with all the glorified Saints in Heaven? (much more to be with the blessed God there)? what Tongue can express, what Heart can conceive, how great a Thing this is! But how is this to be attained? only by being good, and doing good. *Without Holiness no Man shall see God*, nor any who are *with God*. Oh let the *Age* be what it will, (*old* or *young*), see that it be good and gracious; and then this happy *Gathering* will follow upon it: but otherwise, 'tis not to be hoped for. Pray tell me, you that live as *Antipodes* to the Saints on Earth, can you hope to be *imbodied* with those in Heaven? You that hate and persecute the Saints on Earth, can you hope ever to be joined with them that are in Heaven? You that are all for the Society of Sinners below, can you expect to be admitted into the Society of Saints above? surely you cannot so grosly impose upon your selves! At death there is *a sorting* of all Men into their *several Companies*: the Wicked go to the Wicked, the Godly to the Godly; the former to their Predecessors and Companions in Sin; the latter, to their Predecessors and Companions in Grace and Holiness. Oh let the Consideration hereof prevail with us, to put away Sin, and to engage

vs. 1.

Joh. 8. 39.

Heb. 12. 14.

Heb. 6. 12. in all ſerious Piety! *Be Followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promiſes*; that you may pſal. 125. 5. be gathered to them when you die, and not rank'd *amongſt the Workers of Iniquity*.

Uſe 2. 2. It may be improved, *to ſupport againſt the Fear of Death*. How are many, through this Fear, *all their Life Time ſubject unto Bondage!* Hebr. 2. 15. But if ye be *Abraham's Seed* and *Children*, why ſhould it be thus with you?

Here are in the Words of my *Text three* notable *Antidotes againſt this Fear*:

1. What is Death? 'tis but *the giving up of the Ghoſt*; the expiring of the Breath; and that's all (to the Sanctified and holy): And is this a Thing ſo much to be feared? Every Breath that comes from thee, is a kind of Death; when 'tis the *laſt Breath* then it's *Death*; (there's 1 Theſſ. 4. 14. all the Difference). Elſewhere 'tis but a *Sleep*, a *lying* Iſa. 57 2. *down in Bed*, an *uncloathing*, a *Departing*: Oh what 2 Cor. 5 4. mollifying Expreſſions doth the Scripture ſet forth phil. 1. 23. Death by! and all to keep down our inordinate Fear of it.

2. *All* (*ſooner or later*) *are ſubject to it*. 'Tis not we *alone* that die, all are Companions with us in this. The *Patriarchs*, *Prophets*, *Apoſtles*, nay *Chriſt* himſelf, all died: and ſhall we be afraid to walk in that Path which ſo many have trod before us? When *Phocion* ſaw one, who was to die with him, afraid to die; *What* (ſays he) *art thou not glad to fare as* Phocion *does?* So when *Abraham gave up the Ghoſt and died*, (with innumerable others), ſhall we be overwhelmed with Fear when it ſhall be our turn to die? *Plutarch. in Apoth.*

3. *After the Dying comes the Gathering*. That Death that breaks our *Company below*, advances us to far better *Com-*

Company above. It takes the Key of Heaven (as it were) and lets us into the Society of *Saints* and *Angels*, yea of *God* himſelf, and the bleſſed *Ieſus*. And ſhall we then * fear to die? Oh let's get above this!

* Ejus eſt mortem timere, qui ad Chriſtum nolit tranſire. *Cyprian.*

3. *Let all God's People rejoyce in the Thoughts of Heaven.* What a Place and State will that be to ſuch! when you ſhall be gathered into the *Fellowſhip* of the glorified Saints; ſhall ſee *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Iacob* (with all the reſt of that vaſt Body); ſhall converſe with them and have Communion with them in the praiſing, admiring and magnifying of God for ever: what a tranſcendent Happineſs will this be! Here your Company is *mixt*, there none but Saints ſhall be with you. Here your Company is often *afflictive* to you, there it ſhall be wholly *rejoicing* to your Souls. Here, the Beſt you converſe with have their *Infirmities*; there, all ſhall be *perfect*. Here, you ſee *this* and *that Saint*, (ſcattered as a little good Grain in the midſt of a Field of Tares); there you ſhall ſee the *whole Body* of Saints from firſt to laſt. The Sight of *one* St. *Paul* would be a bleſſed Sight; but to ſee *all* the *Apoſtles*, all the *Martyrs* and *Confeſſors*, all the great Inſtruments of God's Glory (ancient and modern)? Lord, what a tranſporting and raviſhing Sight will that be! How ſhould the ſerious Senſe of this both fill up our Joy, and alſo inflame our Deſires after Heaven! How divinely does the Oratour ſpeak! *O bleſſed Day, when I ſhall go to that divine Society and Convention of Souls, and ſhall be freed from thoſe Crowds & filthy Perſons that are here!* had he ſuch Notions of a future State, and of the Happineſs thereof? what Notions ſhould we have of it!

Uſus 3.

O præclarum diem, cùm ad illud di interna Animarum Concilium cœtumq; e proficiſcar; & cùm ex hac turba & colluvione diſcedam! *Tul. de Sen.*

And

And yet that which I have been upon, is but the *leaſt* of Heaven. To be *gathered* to the *glorified Saints*, is very good; ah! but to be *gathered* to *God*, to *Chriſt*? to be admitted into the immediate *Preſence*, *Viſion*, and *Fruition* of theſe? ſurely this is incomparably better! This is the Heaven of Heavens, the very *Top* and *Zenith* of Glory. And this ſhall be the Felicity of all who are ſincere with God: 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 17. *So ſhall we ever be with the Lord: Having a Deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.* Philip. 1. 23. *In thy Preſence is Fulneſs of Joy, at thy right Hand are Pleaſures for evermore*, Pſal. 16. 11. Oh therefore, you who fear God and walk with him (as the great Inſtance in the Text did), how may you comfort your ſelves in this! and what cauſe have you, to ſay, *My Soul doth magnify the Lord* —. *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name.*

The

THE first part of my Work is dispatch'd; I go on to the second. The Example which the Text propounds, I have done with; I come now to that Example, which the Providence of God sets before us this day.

You all expect I should say something of that Antient, Faithful, Eminent Minister of Christ, and Servant of God, Mr. *Thomas Case*, whose Funerals (in the *Religious Part* of them) we now solemnize.

Concerning him therefore, I will,

1. *Give a brief Account of his Life and Death.*
2. *Then give a more particular Narrative of him, in his several Capacities.*

Not to instance in the *Time* and *Place* of his *Birth*, he was the Son of a Minister in *Kent*; (a Person eminent in his time for Parts and Piety). This he testified, as in all other things, so in his great Care to give this his Son a pious and religious Education: which he was the more excited and encouraged unto, upon his perceiving of those more than ordinary buddings and blossomings of Grace and Ingenuity, that were in him in his Childhood.

When he was grown up, and fit to be sent abroad, he was put to School; first at *Canterbury*, then at *Merchant-Taylors* School (in this City). And there he was continued, until his Father, meeting with Troubles and Embroylments in his Estate, (by Law-Suits and

and other Occaſions), was forced to remove him from theſe Nurſeries, and to take him home to himſelf; where he gave him all that Inſtruction in the *Arts* and *Languages*, that his many Diverſions would admit of.

Adde perſent & alij haud pauci, ab eruditione merito celebrandi; quales crediderim—, *Thomam Caſe*, &c. *Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* l. 2. p. 283.

Having arrived at a Competency of Age and Learning, he was ſent to the Univerſity, admitted in *Chriſt-Church* in *Oxford*, (that Famous Society); where his Induſtry and Proficiency was ſuch, as that, by the *Dean* and *Canons* (then being), he was unanimouſly elected *Student* of that Houſe. There he reſided till he had commenc'd *Maſter of Arts*, and a Year or two after.

From thence (he now being in a conſiderable meaſure fitted for the Work of the Miniſtry), by the great Importunity of Mr. *R. Herrick*, (his moſt intimate and affectionate Friend), he was prevailed with to come to him, and to be with him at his Benefice in *Norfolk*. After ſome ſhort ſtay with him, he was called to the Exerciſe of his Miniſtry at *Erpingham*, (a Town in the ſame *County*). There he continued eight or ten Years; indefatigable in his Work, *preaching* twice every Lords-day, *expounding* the Holy Scriptures, *catechiſing* the Younger, *repeating* in private what he had delivered in publick. Hither many reſorted to him, to partake of his Labours; and God wonderfully ſucceeded them to the Converſion of many Souls.

But meeting with Troubles in that Dioceſs, (under *Bp. Wren*), he was forced to remove out of it. His fore-mentioned Friend, (being made *Warden* of *Mancheſter*) took him into *Lancaſhire* with him: there in a ſhort time he was preſented to a Place in the *Neighbouring County*. But great Revolutions happening in the

the Nation a little after, he was, (by the Urgency of ſome Perſons of Quality) perſwaded to accompany them to *London*: So Providence firſt brought him hither, and then fixed him here.

Here he was choſen firſt Lecturer, then Paſtor at *Milk-Street*; where, how laborious and faithful he was in his Lord's Work, many yet living can teſtify. Beſides his *Lord's-day*s Pains in this Place, he preach'd a weekly Lecture every *Saturday*; (in order to Perſons being the better prepared for the Sabbath). And here he firſt ſet up the *Morning Exerciſe*; which has been kept up in this City (from place to place) ever ſince; (it too having lived to a *good old Age*, and not as yet *given up the Ghoſt*).

And not confining his Labours to this Pariſh, he alſo preached a Lecture at St. *Martin's in the Fields* every *Thurſday*; which he kept up above twenty Years.

In thoſe days, the *Engagement* being vehemently urg'd, and he refuſing to take it, he was put out of his Place at *Milk-Street*. But God would not have him to be idle; if one Door be ſhut upon him, another ſhall be opened. He was therefore called to preach as Lecturer, at *Alderman-bury*, and at St. *Giles Cripplegate*. In which Congregations, he continued preaching Chriſt and the Goſpel, till he was ſent Priſoner to the *Tower*; (where he was confined about *ſix Months*). The Grounds of this Impriſonment, (wherein ſeveral others, of Name and Worth, were Companions with him; to *Two* of which, it ended in more than bare Impriſonment, in Death it ſelf); I ſay, the Grounds of this, are well known to all that know any thing of the Tranſactions of the late Times. We then thought they ſuffered for their *Loyalty* and *Fidelity* to

their *Soveraign*; if the preſent *unkind Age* have other Notions of it, we muſt ſubmit.

After his Releaſe he was invited to be Lecturer at St. *Giles in the Fields*. Mr. *Moline* (then Rector there) dying, he was choſe in his Stead. And ſo continued, till, upon *his Majeſty's Reſtauration*, the ancient *Incumbent* was readmitted.

In the Year 1660 he was one of the Miniſters, deputed by his Brethren in this City, to wait upon his Majeſty at the *Hague*, to congratulate his Reſtauration. With reſpect to which I may confidently ſay, as none (in his Sphere) did more cordially endeavour to promote it, before it was accompliſhed; ſo none did more cordially rejoice in it, when it was accompliſh'd.

When that black and fatal Day, *Aug.* 24. 1662. came, he fared as the reſt of his Brethren did, (who were not ſatisfied to conform). Here his Miniſtry in Publick was at an end; yet (as God gave Opportunity) he ceaſed not *in Private* to be doing all the good he could. And in this Diligence he held on, till the Infirmities of his great Age wholly diſabled him for any further Miniſterial Work.

One remarkable Paſſage of his Life muſt not be omitted; (I hope, the Recital of bare Matter of Fact will give no Offence). He was a Member of that *Aſſembly*, which, in the Year 1643, was called by the *Parliament* (as then ſitting) to adviſe in Matters of Religion. And I think, he liv'd to ſurvive all of that Body, (one only excepted).

I have gone over the ſeveral *Turns* and *Motions* of his Life, and led you from one Stage to another of it: 'tis the laſt only that remains yet to be ſpoken unto.

It pleaſed God, (the great *Arbiter vitæ & necis*) to lengthen

lengthen out his Life to a very old Age: He lived to * 84 Years, and then *died.* On *May* 30*th* laſt paſt he *finiſhed his Courſe*; and on *June* 14*th* was decently interr'd in *Chriſt Church* in this City. And now, how is my *Text* exemplified in *him* as well as in *Abraham!* He *gave up the Ghoſt, and died:* how willingly did he reſign up his Soul to God! Death found no Reſiſtance from him, (alas! he had been long deſiring and waiting for it); he quietly and readily yielded to it. And what an *eaſy Death* did God bleſs him with! The Oil was ſpent, ſo the Lamp went out. There was no Sickneſs, no Pain, no Groans, or Agonies at the laſt; he juſt breathed out his laſt Breath, and that was all. It's ſaid of *Jacob, when he had made an end of commanding his Sons, he gathered up his Feet into the Bed, and yielded up the Ghoſt,* Gen. 49. 33. Juſt thus it was with our deceaſed Father; for riſing from Dinner he deſired ſome repoſe upon his Bed; where, as ſoon as ever he was laid, he *gathered up his Feet,* and *ſo yielded up the Ghoſt.* This facil Death he had much deſired, and often prayed for, and he had it: *Sortitus eſt facilem exitum, & qualem ſemper optaverat*; (as the Hiſtorian of *Auguſtus*).

* Tully's *Age.* Quartum annum ago & octogeſimum. *Lib. de Sen.*

And he *died in a good old Age.* Good, as to the *Greatneſs* of it: Good, as to the *Health* and Strength of it; (a few Years indeed before his Death, his Limbs were much enfeebled, his Memory much impair'd; but till then, he had as much Vegetenes and Vigor every way, as could be expected in one of his Years). Good, in the *beſt Sence,* as it *ſucceeded a well-ſpent Life,* and as it was fill'd up with *gracious and holy Actings to the Laſt.* He began with God *betimes,* and he kept cloſe to God *to the End.*

And now he is *gathered to his People*; tranſlated into the *bleſſed State*, gone to the *general Aſſembly, and Church of the Firſt-born, to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect.* Taken up *to his People*; to thoſe now in Glory, who by his Miniſtry were converted: (and oh what rejoicing is there, in Them to ſee their *Spiritual Father*; in Him to ſee the *Children* that God has given him!) He has now a view of all the glorified Saints, and is one of them: Yea, he has now the Viſion of God himſelf, and of his dear Redeemer. What he wrote in his *Piſgah* about Heaven, he has now the experimental Knowledg of. He that died in *Abraham's good old Age*, now lies in *Abraham's Boſom.* He that was a decay'd and decrepit Man here on Earth, with what Strength and Vigour is he loving, praiſing, adoring God in Heaven! Holy was his Life, and happy was his Death. He is with God, and ſo ſhall be *for ever.*

Thus I have given you a ſhort Narrative of his *Life* and *Death*; but a more particular and diſtinct Account of him, as to what *he was*, muſt be further added. And in order to this, I will conſider him in a *fourfold Capacity.*

I. *As a Man.*
II. *As a Chriſtian.*
III. *As a Miniſter.*
IV. *As ſtanding in ſuch and ſuch Relations.*

In the Characteriſing of him under theſe *Heads*, I will keep cloſe to the Truth, and ſay nothing but what I apprehend to be truly ſo. And as I would not diminiſh his Merit, and any way leſſen his real Worth, (which would be diſingenuous towards him); ſo neither will I advance it above its juſt Pitch and Meaſure, (for that would be injurious to my ſelf).

I. Let's

I. Let's consider him as *a Man*. So he was one, whom God had endowed with *excellent Parts*, (*Natural* and *Acquir'd*: (some I know are not of my Opinion in this; be it so, they have their Liberty of judging, and I have mine). He was very happy in a *good* and *quick Invention*; which first furnish'd him with *smart Notions* (upon all Occasions), and then with *apt Expressions* to utter them: and this too was attended, in a good Proportion, with a *solid Judgment*. It's very rare, for one and the same Person to be *eminent* in *all the Accomplishments* that are proper to the several Faculties; Strength of *Reason*, Depth of *Judgment*, Quickness of *Fancy*, Retentiveness of *Memory*, seldom concur in the same Subject; we value him who is *eminent* in any *One* of these, though he be not so in the *Rest* too. I speak very modestly of our *deceased Friend* when I make this to be his Case; (but of the two I chuse rather to go *too low* than *too high*). Towards the Close of his Life, when the Infirmities of a great Age were upon him, there was a *sensible Decay* in his Parts; yet even then it might be seen what he had been in the Prime of his Days; (as the Glory of *Carthage* might be discern'd in the Ruins of it).

For his *Natural Temper*, he had *fervidum Ingenium*, a pritty quick and warm Spirit; zealous he was for, or against, what he approv'd or disapprov'd; (especially if God and Religion were concern'd therein). And this, in the late *unhappy Controversies*, expos'd him to severe Censures from more than *One Party*; (whether justly or not, 'tis not for me to determine). Onely this I would say for him, if sometimes undue Heat did prevail in him, either in Words or Actions, much Allowance is to be given for it to his natural Temper.

And

And further he was an *open, plain-hearted Man*; One, who was totally a Stranger to those little Arts and Frauds, those subtile Reserves and Pretences, which the World is too full of. He knew much of other things, but as to *Dissimulation*, I think he knew as little of that as any. What Opinion he embraced, he never concealed; and what Affection prevailed, he usually disclosed. He was so honest and true, as always *to think what he spake*; and (for the most part) so un-reserv'd, as to *speak what he thought*. He could (I question not) had he pleased, have acted the *Wisdom of the Serpent*, as well as others; but he was wholly for the *Simplicity of the Dove*; (If this was a Fault, pray pardon it; there are but few that err on this hand).

In his *Converses*, he was hearty, affectionate, all Love and Kindness; not morose and magisterial, but affable and obliging; not vain and frothy, yet facetious and pleasant; not confining to himself what might be useful to others, but very communicative. He was somewhat hasty and passionate, but his Passion was soon over; Anger *rested* not in him, the Fire was quenched as soon as kindled; (the sooner the better)! Many other *Characters* of him might be heaped up; but these few are sufficient to give a short view of him, considered as *a Man*.

2. As *a Christian*; and such he was not in *Title* and *Profession* only, but in *Truth* and *Reality*; (so far as we can judge) a *truly gracious and upright Man*. How sincere, eminent, conspicuous, were all the several Graces in him!

He was an ardent *Lover of God*, of *Goodness*, and of all *Good Men*. His *Fear of Sin*, and of offending God, was very great; his *Publick Ministry* was very dear to him,

him, yet when he could not enjoy it without ſubmitting to that which *to him* was ſinful, (not that he judg'd *others* by himſelf), he patiently laid it down. His Heart was full of *Penitential Brokenneſs*: how often have I ſeen him pouring forth Tears, in the Confeſſion of his own and other Mens Sins! His *Zeal* for God, was exceeding high; (wherein his *natural Fervour* was helpful to him): he could quietly bear his own Sufferings, all the Indignities offered to himſelf; but when he ſaw God diſhonoured, the Goſpel reproached, the Truth thereof oppoſed and undermin'd, the good way of Holineſs evilly ſpoken of, this he could not bear without great Commotion of Spirit. He *minded Heaven* more than *Earth*; (as appears by that ſmall Eſtate which he left, after he had been in the Miniſtry ſo long, and in ſuch conſiderable Places for Gain and Profit). He had a *large Heart* for Charity, (had his Purſe been equal to it). His *Communication* was *ſavoury* and edifying; and altho, (as has been hinted) he ſometimes would be facetious in his Diſcourſes, yet ſo, as that always he would *miſcere utile dulci*; mingle that which ſhould profit with that which ſhould delight. Under his greateſt bodily Infirmities at the laſt, when any came to viſit him, he would ſtill be dropping ſome ſpiritual and heavenly Matter into them. Who more *ſenſible* of the *Church's Calamities* and *Diſtreſſes* than he? Oh how did he uſe to melt and diſſolve in Prayer, when he was ſpreading the Concerns of *Zion* before the Lord! He was indeed a *praying Man*; one that was *frequent* and *fervent* in this bleſſed Duty. Not contented with the *ſtated* and more *ordinary* Performance of it, how did he ſet apart, upon ſpecial Occaſions and more than common Emergencies,

gencies, *whole days* to be ſpent in ſolemn calling upon God! And when he himſelf, in his old Age, was much diſabled for Prayer he would ſcarce let any Miniſter (who came to viſit him) go from him, till he had pray'd with him. Indeed, his firſt Converſion began *with this*; and ſo too, it continued with this. It pleaſed God, (as he himſelf related it to me) to work upon him *betimes*, when he was but *ſix Years* old. And at that Age, through the Influence of Divine Grace, he was inclin'd by himſelf, every Morning and Evening, to pray: And this he did, not by the help of any *Book* or *Form* (read or remembred); but by the gracious Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit: Nay, this he did, not upon any *Precept* or *Direction*, either from his Father or any other Perſon; but ſolely upon God's drawing of his Heart to it: (So as that of *Tertullian* is very applicable to him, — *Sine Monitore, quia de Pectore*). Some things I am credibly informed of, relating to his *managing of Prayer* with others, when he was grown to eight Years of Age; but fearing many will not believe them, and many will turn them into Ridicule and Deriſion; I judg it beſt not to mention them. By what I have ſaid it appears, *that from a Child of ſix Years, to an aged Man of 84 Years, he kept a continued, uninterrupted Courſe of Prayer.*

Several other Graces ſhining in him might be inſtanc'd in: As his great *Love to Ordinances*; how did it afflict him in his confined Condition that he could not enjoy theſe! His *patient waiting* for his long-deſired, but long-delaied Releaſe, was very admirable. (But I graſp at too much! theſe, with ſome other of the like nature, I muſt paſs over).

By

By what I have (or ſhould further have) ſaid, do I deſign to repreſent him as one that was *perfect?* Good, and unmixtly Good? Oh no! He had his *dark ſide* as well as his *bright ſide*, his *Corruptions* as well as his *Graces*, his *Infirmities* as well as his *Excellencies:* And where ſhall we find the Perſon with whom 'tis not thus? He was a good Man, yet *but a Man*; he was in the State of Grace, but it was but in the *imperfect State* of Grace. I would give him his due Worth, (which was very great); but yet ſo as not to advance him above what he was. And the truth is, when I conſider his *Natural Temper*, the *Perſonal Infirmities* which he lay under, (which have been glanc'd at), the many Temptations which he, as well as others, was aſſaulted with, I conclude, *all his Grace was little enough for him:* Nay, aſſuredly it would have been too little, had not an *higher Grace been ſufficient for him.*

3. As *a Miniſter:* And as he ſtood in this Capacity, his Worth and Eminency cannot but be ſo well known in this City, (where he exerciſed his Miniſtry, in Publick and in Private, about forty Years); as that it will be ſuperfluous for me to ſay much about it. In ſhort therefore, he was an excellent Miniſter of Chriſt; who, if he be not to be rank'd amongſt the *firſt three*, (the moſt famous and eminent of our Preachers in *England*), yet he may well be look'd upon as *more honourable than the Thirty.* 2 Sam. 23. 23.

His *Miniſterial Abilities* were very conſiderable. He was another *Apollos, an eloquent Man, and mighty in the Scriptures*; a Scribe, *inſtructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven*; in whom the *Word of God dwelt richly*; out of which *Treaſure* he ever brought *things new and old.*

He was as *Scriptural Preacher*; had a ſingular Happineſs in citing of Texts pertinent to the Matter he was upon, and then in the opening and applying of them. And as his Preaching was *ſolid* and *judicious*, ſo it was *acute* too; fill'd up with quick and nimble Invention: He would ſharpen plain, practical Doctrines, with conſiderable mixtures of Ingenuity and Fancy. His great deſign in his Miniſtry was, not to *perplex* his Hearers, but to *edify* them; not to fill them with quaint *Notions* and *Speculations*, but with *ſerious* and *important Truths*; not to pleaſe their *Ears*, but to better their *Hearts*, and awaken their *Conſciences*; not to advance his own *Reputation*, but the *eternal Salvation* of them who heard him.

So long as God ſpared him Strength, none more conſtant and frequent in Preaching than he; and when God laid him aſide, that he could preach no more, what an Affliction was that to him! And his Frequency in it, did not leſſen his Pains in due preparing for it; his Sermons were well weighed and ſtudied, (he not daring to *offer to the Lord that which coſt him nothing.*

What a great Man he was in *Prayer*, all they can teſtify who ever joyned with him therein. Indeed, God had endowed him with an admirable Gift as to this; (I firmly hope it was ſomething more than a *bare Gift*). He was ſeverely *Orthodox*, *ſound in the Faith* to a degree of Rigor, a thorough-pac'd *Calviniſt*, a firm Adherer to, and Aſſertor of the *Doctrine* of our *Church*; (though he differed as to ſome *Rites* and Ceremonies impoſed in it): And herein he ſtood ſtedfaſt and unmovable to his laſt Breath.

God bleſſed his Labours where-ever he came, with *conſiderable Succeſs*. In all Places, whither the Providence

dence of God carried him, he had the Seals of his Miniſtry in the Converſion of many Souls. There are many now in Heaven, many yet remaining here on Earth, who with Comfort can call him their *Spiritual Father.*

He has not publiſhed much of his Labours; but what he has * publiſhed, ſhows him to be an able, *Practical Divine.*

* *His* Piſgah. *Corrections, Inſtructions. Sermons upon particular Occaſions.*

4. I come to the fourth and laſt thing, to conſider him in his *Relative Capacity:* In which, he was as praiſe-worthy, and does as much deſerve Imitation, as in any of the foregoing Conſiderations of him.

God bleſt him with a pious and prudent *Conſort*; (I muſt ſay no more of her, becauſe ſhe is yet living): And what an high degree of Love was there betwixt them! Indeed, they may be Patterns and Examples of Conjugal Affection and Concord to all who knew them. They lived together near 45 Years; and how often have I heard him ſay, *In all that time there had been no Contention betwixt them, except in this, who ſhould love one another moſt.*

He had no *Children* of his own; but his Wives Children he was as tender over, and as affectionate unto, as if they had been his own. His Love to them, and Care of them, was ſcarce to be paralleld, ſure not to be exceeded. And how he pray'd for them, inſtructed them, us'd all means for their Spiritual Good, I hope they will never forget.

He had other *Relations* of *his own*; ſome of which, by Providence were caſt upon him, for his Care and Relief. And he was a Father to them, at once caring for their Bodies and Souls too.

And as to his *whole Family*, he was ever careful of the Souls of all that came under his Roof; in inſtructing them in the Principles of Religion, in helping them to underſtand the Scriptures; which were read in his Family Morning and Evening. And his Method was, to cauſe every Child and Servant to remember ſomething that had been read; which he would then in a plain and familiar way, open to them, and ſo proceed to Prayer. He had many Servants, who lived with him, that bleſs God that ever they came into his Houſe.

I have parallell'd him with *Abraham* in his *Death*; I might, (with a *ſalvâ diſtantiâ*) alſo parallel him with *Abraham* in his *Life*: as they *died alike*, ſo they *lived alike*. I'll go no further than the thing laſt mentioned. *Abraham* is famous for his Zeal about his Family; God himſelf has put an high Character upon him for this: *Gen.* 18. 19. *For I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord, to do Juſtice and Judgment; that the Lord may bring upon* Abraham *that which he hath ſpoken of him.* And juſt thus it was with our *Reverend Father*, (allowing the Diſparity betwixt Perſon and Perſon).

Well, I have ſhewn you what a Man *he was*, who *died in a good old Age, an old Man, full of Years, and is now gathered to his People.* Nothing now remains but a word of *Exhortation.*

1. *To Chriſtians*; to you, who move in a private Orb. Many things might be ſuggeſted to you, upon the death of this aged and faithful Servant of God; but I ſhall commend this only to you, *Prize good Miniſters while you have them, and be afflicted when you loſe them.*

them. How many Mercies do you deprive your ſelves of, by your *undervaluing* them? And particularly, how many *good Miniſters* are *removed* from you, becauſe you do not put ſuch a value upon them as you ought? When God takes them away, then you ſee the worth of them, but not till then. Did not ſome of you ſit under the Minſtry of him, who is now dead and gone? Pray, was his *Perſon*, *Miniſtry*, *Labours*, prized and eſtimated according to what they deſerved? True, he lived to a great Age; but I fear, the Lives of many others are *ſhortened*, by that ſlighting of them which they meet with from their People. Wherefore I beſeech you, *to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you; and to eſteem them highly in Love for their Work's ſake.* And further, ſo *prize* them as *to improve them*; ſo as to thrive and profit by them. *Do the Prophets live for ever?* your faithful Guides and Teachers, do they not die? *Now* you have them, in a few days they are taken from you; does it not then concern you to make the beſt of their Labours whilſt you partake of them? How many Miniſters have you worn out and ſpent! and are you not at all the better for them? The better the Miniſter, is under whom you are placed, the worſer it will be with you, if you be barren and unprofitable under him.

And then, *Be afflicted for, bewail and lament the loſs of good Miniſters.* Indeed this is a great loſs! (whether ye conſider the *Benefits* ye percieve by them; or the *Evils* that this does preſage and boad): and therefore, ſhould it not be laid to Heart? Indeed, as to our *deceaſed Brother*, (his great Age and Circumſtances being conſidered); you have more reaſon to rejoyce for that he *lived ſo long*, than to mourn that he *died at laſt*.

Ah!

Ah! but how many eminent Inſtruments are cut off, when they are young, in their * *beſt State?* or when they are but juſt † *entred* upon a conſiderable Age? Oh, when ſuch die, with what grief of Soul ſhould that be reſented by all ſerious Chriſtians!

* *Mr.* Charnock, *Mr.* Stockton, *&c.*

† *As lately, that uſeful Miniſter, and faithful Servant of God, Mr.* Richard Fairclough.

2. *To Miniſters:* My Brethren, you ſee how your number is leſſened day by day; the *ancient Oaks* and *Cedars* are almoſt all cut down: and what is the Duty now of you who ſurvive? Surely, to *double* and *treble* your *Diligence* in your Lord's Work; the fewer Hands are left, the more laborious thoſe muſt be that are left; when other Pillars are removed, the more Weight does lie upon thoſe which ſtand; the fewer there are to preach the everlaſting Goſpel, the more induſtrious they muſt be in this, who are yet ſpared. The *Antient* die, where are the *Young* Ones to ſucceed them? to ſtand in their ſtead, and to fill up the Vacancies made by their Death? Bleſſed be God for it, ſome ſuch there are; (and they too, Perſons of excellent Accompliſhments for the Work of the Miniſtry): God increaſe their Number, and double the Spirit of his old *Elijah's* upon them! that ſtill there may be a Succeſſion of faithful *Labourers in the Lord's Harveſt.*

3. *To Relations*; (the near and dear Relations of the Deceaſed). What ſhall I ſay to you? ſhall I preſs *Patience* and *Submiſſion* upon you, under this loſs? Certainly, (his Condition being conſidered) even his neareſt Relation, (though ſhe has the greateſt ſhare in it), needs no Excitation to Patience. Had he been taken away when he was in the Prime of his Days, then the Affliction would have been very great; then all Motives to quiet Submiſſion to God's Will, had been little enough; but when it was otherwiſe,

I hope there's not the leaſt riſing of Impatience in you. Your Duty is, *Thankfulneſs*, and *Imitation: Thankfulneſs*, that ever you had him, and that you enjoyed him ſo long: *Imitation*, ſo as to tread in his Steps, and to write after that excellent Copy that he has ſet you. And you that are *Young*, pray remember the Tears he ſhed for you, the holy Counſel and Admonition he gave you, that great Love that he expreſſed to you; and let all prevail with you, to love God, the People of God, and to engage with your whole Heart in ſerious and univerſal Godlineſs. And then, if you be Followers of him, as he is *gathered to his People*, to *his God* and *Saviour*; ſo, whenever your Dying-time ſhall come, (as God alone knows how ſoon it will come), you ſhall be made Partakers with him of the *ſame Felicity*.

FINIS.